

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the Office Action dated March 26, 2004.

Specification

1. The abstract has been amended accordingly.
2. The relevant applications numbers have been inserted on page 1 of the description.

Amendments

Claim 1 has been amended to specify that the timer module is for a compact printer system and that the bus is further connectable to at least a printer module. Basis for these amendments can be found throughout the specification, and specifically at, for example, page 4, lines 15-18 of the description.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The Applicant contests the Examiner's assertion that the present invention, as defined in claim 1, is obvious in view of Maruichi (US 5,469,211) and further in view of Ohki (US 2002/0001032 A1).

The present invention relates to a timer module for a compact printer system. The compact system comprises a plurality of interconnectable modules, which can be linked together in a chain via suitable connectors (*e.g.* male and female connectors). A common power and data connection between modules is provided by a bus, which allows the system to be built up modularly. Each module in the system comprises part of the bus so that the length of the bus is defined by the number of modules in the system. Ultimately, the bus is connectable to a printer module; hence, each module forms part of a printer system and is specifically configured for use in the printer system. However, each module may not necessarily be connected to the printer module in use, provided that the module can send information to the bus, which can then relay information (*e.g.* digital photographic information) to the printer module when the printer module is connected to the bus.

The prior art documents cited in the Office Action fail to suggest, either alone or in combination, a timer module according to the present invention having the features described above.

Maruichi (US 5,469,211)

This document describes a video camera having a remote control receiver for remote control of the video camera by infrared rays. The remote control receiver contains time interval switches and is releasably connected to the video camera by means of a connecting cord.

However, the control receiver in Maruichi does not form part of a modular compact printer system. Claim 1 specifies of the present application specifies that the timer module comprises "at least one connection means ... for connecting the timer to a bus, wherein said bus provides power and data between said timer module and said camera, and said bus is further connectable to at least a printer module".

In other words, it is an essential feature of the timer module of the present invention that it is adapted to form part of a compact printer system. The control receiver described in Maruichi is not adapted to form part of a compact printer system. Maruichi merely describes a video camera; it makes no mention of a modular compact printer system having a timer module specifically adapted for incorporation therein. Moreover, there is no suggestion in Maruichi of modifying the video camera disclosed therein such that it includes a printer module, which is connectable to a common bus. Modular printer systems built on a common bus are not suggested anywhere in Maruichi. Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 1 of the present application is not obvious in view of Maruichi.

Ohki (US 2002/0001032 A1)

Ohki describes a portable computer having add-on modules. One of these modules is a digital camera adaptor; another of these modules is a printer. However, Ohki does not suggest anywhere a modular compact printer system having a printer, a camera and a timer module all connectable to a common bus.

Ohki does not mention a timer module at all and makes no suggestion of having a timer module having a connection means for connecting it to the camera adaptor. Even if

(which is denied) it were obvious to combine the disclosure of Ohki with that of Maruichi, one would still be unable to arrive at the present invention. The printer and the camera adaptor in Ohki do not communicate via a common bus, since these modules have no mutual interconnection. It is an essential feature of the present invention that the bus, which connects the timer module to the camera module is further connectable to a printer module. The bus in Ohki connects the printer to either a GPS adaptor or a portable computer, but not to a camera. Hence, Ohki fails to teach or suggest the underlying concept of the present invention. Accordingly, it is submitted that the timer module of the present invention is not obvious from Maruichi, either alone or in combination with Ohki.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw his objections against claim 1 under 35 USC § 103 in view of the above. Since the remaining claims are all dependent on claim 1, it is submitted that the Examiner's objections against these claims should, likewise, be withdrawn.

Double Patenting

In response to the Examiner's provisional objection of obviousness-type double patenting in view of US Application No. 10/636,276, the Applicant files herewith a terminal disclaimer.

It is respectfully submitted that all of the Examiner's objections have been successfully traversed. Accordingly, it is submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of the application is courteously solicited.

Very respectfully,

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